



Tempo

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SEPTEMBER 1992

SEPTEMBER CALENDAR

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Thursday, Sept. 3

Executive Board
DMEA Office - 4:00 p.m.

Tuesday, Sept. 8

GA/LA Committee
DMEA Office - 4:00 p.m.

Tuesday, Sept. 8

All Associates Meeting
North High Library
4:00 p.m.

Tuesday, Sept. 8

SCHOOL BOARD
ELECTION

Thursday, Sept. 10

Faculty Representatives
North Cafeteria
4:00 p.m.

Monday, Sept. 14

IPD Committee
DMEA Office - 4:00 p.m.

Thursday, Sept. 17

Executive Board
DMEA Office - 4:00 p.m.

Friday, Sept. 18

Fall Party at Stella's
6:00 p.m.

Monday, Sept. 21

Human Relations
Committee
DMEA Office - 4:00 p.m.

Thursday, Sept. 24

Dept. of Nurses
DMEA Office - 4:00 p.m.

From the President...

I wish I could say "Welcome Back! Everything is just as you left it in June." I can't. The actions taken by what is now known as the *Three-Legislative-Sessions-from-Hell* will have a very dramatic impact upon what takes place in our schools and our professional lives this year.

There are those who would say that the Association has little power to alter the course of events. If that were true, imagine what returning to school this September would be like if it were not for the united efforts of members of the Des Moines Education Association, the Iowa State Education Association, and the National Education Association.

- There would be no \$500 stipend for Career Level III-A or \$250 incentive payments for Effective Teaching Courses. There would be no discussion about Building Activity funds or Building Specialists. There would be no support for Comprehensive School Transformation because

there would be no Phase III.

- Without a sales tax increase and additional state revenues, more across-the-board budget cuts would be in store for schools.
- Federal funds for education would have been diverted into voucher plans.
- Without the Instructional Support Levy, there would not be a counselor in every elementary. Class sizes would be increasing even more without these funds to hire additional teachers.
- Associates would be expected to perform medical procedures such as the catheterization of students.



KRIS MESICEK

CONTINUED ON PAGE 4

From the Director...

In the May 1992 issue of the *TEMPO*, in writing about Walt Galvin's impending retirement, your DMEA President, Kris Mesicek asked, "How do you replace someone who has put so much of his life into education and building the Association as a leader and then as an Executive Director?" As that "replacement", I share with you my thoughts and feelings in following in Walt's impressive footprints. First, there is no way that anyone can really "replace" someone of his unique talents and experience. I accept this notion and will instead devote my particular energies to the Association, keeping in mind my gratitude to him and to you for providing me the opportunity to work as a member of a dynamic Association team. You and he have together accomplished much for the DMEA, its individual members and thus, the Des Moines Public Schools.

Now we must work in concert to address the difficult days and problems that challenge us. In beginning to arm ourselves

for that conflict, DMEA leaders joined other ISEA leaders from around the state at the annual leadership conference. This year's training was new in two ways: it was held at Buena Vista

College in Storm Lake and it was focused primarily on political action. All of us have heard the objections **vis a vis** teachers in a professional organization becoming involved in politics. However, our standard response, "Every decision that effects public education is a political decision", has never been made more abundantly clear than in 1992. We responded to the extraordinary actions of the governor and legislature with unprece-



MARY D. LANGE

CONTINUED ON PAGE 4

NEA Convention

The National Education Association Representative Assembly, known more commonly as the NEA Convention, was held this year in Washington, D.C. in early July. Once again the DMEA delegation was the largest of any Iowa unit at the convention. There were fifteen Des Moines-elected representatives in attendance, all elected either locally or state-wide. In the group were President Kris Mesicek, Vice President Wayne Bauman, Alice Boyd, Sue Burt, Becky Cooper, Martha Cumpton, Rita Hill, Deb Henry, Karen Howard, ISEA President Angie King, Paul Mann, Ken Miller, Russ Poggemann, Griff Reese, and Carmen Winters. Executive Director Walt Galvin was there as well.

It is an awesome sight, especially for first-time representatives to watch the Representative Assembly in action. To witness at home how disorderly small meetings can become and then to see more than 8,500 voting delegates conduct business in an orderly fashion, using proper parliamentary procedure, is to see a near-miracle. This is the largest democratic deliberative body in the world, conducting the business of the largest employee organization in the nation. But the National Education Association is actually international in its membership, for in attendance in Washington were delegates from Europe and islands stretched across the Pacific. All the policies of the NEA are decided by these 8,500 representatives of the more than 2,000,000 NEA members around the world, and all the representatives were elected by the members they represent.

There are numerous aspects of an assembly. There are speakers: the NEA President, the NEA Director, the President of the World Confederation of Organizations of the Teaching Profession (WCOTP) Mary Hatwood Futrell (former president of NEA), NEA's Friend of Education Jonathon Kozol, who delivered a soft-toned, but absolutely dynamic speech that kept everyone's attention. However, clearly the rouser of the rousers was the appearance of Bill Clinton. He came not to make a speech, but to answer prepared questions from certain delegates. Clinton stood on an open platform — no podium — with only a hand-held microphone. After a few sentences of introductory remarks, he took the questions. Certain state delegations were assigned to select one of their members to prepare a single question and share it with no one until asked publicly of Bill Clinton. Clinton did a tremendous job of answering all questions in a straight-forward fashion, admitting a couple of times that no one had ever raised such a topic with him before, and still his answers were good. He brought the 10,000+ people (many non-delegates crowded into the arena on that day) to their feet by his declaration that he believed wholeheartedly that public money should go only to public schools. The next day a secret ballot vote was held whether or not the NEA should endorse Clinton's candidacy for the presidency. With a 58 per cent majority required for endorsement, Clinton received the affirmative vote of more than 88 per cent of the delegates. No previous NEA Convention has ever shown such result.

Of course, the work of the assembly is not really to listen to speeches. There are formal actions to be taken. The budget must be adopted. It caused no debate of substance, but there was no hint of railroading. A proposed budget is taken throughout the country to regional hearings and before

caucus groups for input before its final form goes to the assembly. In effect, it has largely been hammered out — and in the open — before the assembly meets. The assembly adopts the NEA's legislative program. This starts as a recommendation from a committee, and then the assembly can amend by addition, deletion, or substitution. When the folks are finished with that process, they adopt the amended program that directs the NEA's posture and activities in dealing with the U.S. Congress and federal executive departments.

What the NEA believes in is summed up in the resolutions, nearly 300 of them. They are divided into categories and further into sub-categories. The categories are: Serve as the national voice for education; Advance the cause of education for all individuals; Promote the health and welfare of children and/or students; Promote professional excellence among educators; Gain recognition of the basic importance of the teacher in the learning process and other employees in the educational effort; Protect the rights of educational employees and advance their interests and welfare; Secure professional autonomy; Unite educational employees for effective citizenship; Promote and protect human and civil rights; Obtain for its members the benefits of an independent, united education profession. If resolutions tell what is believed, what tells the actions to be taken? New business items (NBI) direct the organization in what shall be done. A NBI may have only an internal effect as when some survey is directed. It may have an external effect by directing some department of NEA to take an action against some outside organization, with a boycott being an example, or a march or demonstration. These NBI's are good for one year. A repeat of something ordered in one requires the item to be affirmed by the next assembly.

The most long-lasting vote is the one calling for amending the constitution or by-laws, for that will stand until changed by another amendment. Where voice vote is used on budget, resolutions and new business items, secret ballot is used on amendments to constitution and by-laws, on votes for officers and executive committee members, and on the presidential endorsement mentioned earlier. No substantial changes were made in NEA's governance documents this summer. As for candidates for elective office, Marilyn Monahan of New Hampshire was re-elected to the post of secretary-treasurer. In addition to the president, vice president, and secretary-treasurer, the NEA Executive Committee includes six at-large members. Two positions were open this year. Reg Weaver of Illinois was re-elected, and Roseanne Bacon of Massachusetts was elected to an open seat. It might be interesting to note that the Iowa delegation supported both winning candidates.

The Iowa delegation was capably led by the ISEA President, DMEA's own Angie King. The group worked well and cohesively. Iowa was housed in a beautiful hotel just across the street from the convention center. It could not have been handier, not only to the assembly hall, but to other attractions. The hotel was only a couple of blocks from Ford's Theatre and, more importantly for some, the Hard Rock Cafe. It was quite close to the mall, with the Smithsonian, etc. In many, many respects the 1992 NEA Representative Assembly, with all its attendant activities, was one of the very best in the last quarter-century.

Farewell

by Walt Galvin

How many times has someone told you of doing something with mixed emotions? Here's one more. I'm leaving, with part of me asking, "Are you sure you really want to leave a position that has given you so much satisfaction?" Another part of me is saying, "You're getting up there. You ought to get out of the way for someone else." The second part of me prevailed.

It has been a long time in education. For sixteen and a half years I have been DMEA's executive director in the best educational staff job in Iowa. For over 24 years I taught in Des Moines; for two years before that I taught in small-town Iowa. After 43 years in education work, it probably is time to move along.

When I came to teach in Des Moines (and of course join the DMEA, ISEA, and NEA) Frank Hildreth was my first DMEA president. Except for Jim Wise, no one can remember back that far. As the years went by, DMEA was blessed by fine presidents. I won't name them all. As a teacher-member I saw what a great organization we had, and I was encouraged by what I saw and by the invitations of leaders to become part of many aspects of the Association. Through the years I became deeply involved, and the more involved I became, the more I became attached to the Association, its objectives, stances, and functions. I really developed an emotional attachment.

And then to be selected as executive director! That was really something. With no modesty whatsoever, I believe that the quality that has stood me the greatest stead in this position was bringing and keeping the same feeling for the Association that I had as a teacher-member. I have never seen myself as a hired hand; I have always seen myself as a member in a different role. As a teacher-member for almost a quarter-century, how does one turn off the "feel" upon becoming a paid worker for the organization.

During the last sixteen and a half years, I've worked with and for some very wonderful people. I wish it were possible to list all the officers, the board members, the committee members, and the general members with whom I have had the personal advantage to work. I hope the members realize what a wonderful secretarial staff we have at the DMEA during these years. I certainly do. And I could not leave without stating that I have worked with some very fine administrators and school board members through the years. I am pleased that the relationship between the DMEA on the one hand and the board and administration on the other has been one that people in other school districts have envied. Of course we have battled at times; we've needed to, but we have kept respect for each other. I like to think that I have played a part in this respectful relationship. The person who follows me as executive director, Mary Lange, is a person whom I have known and respected. She is a person who believes as do I, that a quiet resolution of a problem or situation beats bombast every time. We can count on her to continue the respectful relationship even as she maintains the integrity of the Association and the rights of its members.

I leave now, with the ambivalence I mentioned at the beginning nagging at me. Nonetheless, I leave with the hope that the DMEA is somehow better than when I came. Oh, I'll be around. And I'll be back next spring when we celebrate the Diamond Jubilee of the DMEA. We'll have the headquarters building paid for, and since I was president when we bought it, my signature is on the mortgage. I get to light the match to burn that document. And you thought in September I'd be gone for good.

No matter how I phrase it, the simplest thing that covers it all is, *It's been great, and I'll miss you all.*

ACTIVITIES IN HONOR OF WALT GALVIN'S RETIREMENT

Now there are those who maintain that there is no such thing as "retirement," only "redirection." In Walt's case this is especially true. No matter what term you use, we want to send Walt off in a manner that is befitting of all that he has contributed to the Association over the years. Please join in participating in one or both of the activities that have been planned to honor Walt.

RECEPTION

*September 15, 1992
3:00 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.
Salisbury House
4025 Tonawanda Drive*

DINNER and ROAST

*September 26, 1992
6:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m.
Hotel Ft. Des Moines
10th and Walnut*

Tickets: \$25.00

Reservations to the DMEA Office by September 21, 1992.

President's Column — Continued from page 1

- Secretaries, associates, teachers and support staff would either have SHARE insurance or be paying out of their own pockets for Alliance Select or HMO Iowa Insurance.
- Paychecks in September would be considerably less without the collective bargaining strength of the Association.
- Staff members could be arbitrarily reassigned or laid-off without the protection of the Comprehensive Agreement.
- Staff members would be faced with one-week intersessions and the prospect of teaching until late June in un-air-conditioned buildings.

The list could go on and on, but I think you get the point. Now, more than ever, we need the strength that membership in the Association brings if we are to improve the teaching and learning conditions in our schools. We know that by working together, we make a difference!

I've been very impressed with the way Mary Lange has hit the ground running as our Executive Director! Since August 3rd, she has been quickly learning the details of the Phase III Program, the Comprehensive Agreement, and all that goes into the job of Executive Director. I know that you will join me welcoming Mary to Des Moines and the Des Moines Education Association.

Director's Column — Continued from page 1

dented numbers in person and by phone or letter. Hearing this outcry for protection of funding of public schools, they did less damage to our education cause than other segments of the budget. However, they **did** delete forward funding of schools through the use of the funding formula. Instead, the governor will provide his budget recommendations to the legislature in January — including **all** school funding. The legislature is to act on this issue by February 1, then schools must scramble to determine their budgets.

This political action has placed heavy demands on us as an Association and as educators. First, we must **educate** the decision makers — politicians — on the monetary needs of public education. This requires action at two levels: election activities and lobbying activities. We must **identify** and **work** for those candidates who are committed to the future of Iowa through support of our public schools. Your DMEA leaders and executive director(s) met with Polk Suburban leaders and director at Storm Lake to brainstorm a plan of action for impacting the elections in favor of education. Kris will keep you informed of the assistance each of you will need to give in this effort.

On the local level, on August 18, the DMPS board candidates will be interviewed. We will be following the same procedure this year as in previous years. (See September 1991 **TEMPO**).

The second demand that the new timelines place on us is in the bargaining arena. Naturally, our timelines will be altered considerably. Although this entails changes and retraining, I believe it can be used to our advantage. Because we will not be going to the table until January, prior to that we can concentrate our energies on working for the election of education responsive and responsible candidates. During the fall, we will also be communicating with our

members to best represent their needs, concerns, and desires at the bargaining table. Please remember that we are strongest at the table if we can cite specific problems that certain language has created for our members. We need your input.

Almost as soon as I arrived at DMEA August 3, we were involved in very intense meetings about the process to use in responding to the legislative cut of about \$750,000 from our Phase III budget. Kris and Walt did an excellent job of surveying our members as quickly and fairly as time allowed. We were thus able to represent you with accuracy and strength. The net result is responsive to those expressed desires. Of course, that large a cut will definitely have an impact on our Phase III program. Like any other change, though, it provides us an opportunity. After much discussion on the national, state, and local level of the need for site based decision making in many different arenas, including education, we will have a chance to see that vision implemented. Of course, such a massive effort requires extensive training and commitment, but we believe it can and must be done. If we are to convince the governor and legislature to restore, then increase Phase III funding we must provide the evidence that it has and does make a difference in our children's education. By working with DMPS administration in a collaborative mode, we can implement our shared visions. At the meeting, I was very impressed with the commitment that those representing the administration have made in moving forward to restructure and refine schools by the use of School Based Management through Shared Decision Making.

All of which bring me full circle to the beginning of this article: no, I cannot "replace" Walt Galvin, but I am energized by the opportunity to work with DMEA leaders, members and the Des Moines Public Schools to promote the most important avenue to success in the future in our state: *public education*.

Nifty Fifties Night At Stella's

Read my lips. No more barbecue. No, it's the DMEA Second Annual Nifty Fifties Night at Stella's Blue Sky Diner on the skywalk level of Capital Square. It will be held on Friday, September 18th, beginning at 6:30 p.m. There will be a choice of one of three following menu items: (1) R.M.'s chicken fried steak, (2) pork tenderloin sandwich with salad or cole slaw, or (3) bacon cheeseburger (your choice of cheese) with fries. A great selection of drinks comes with the meal, and there is no limit on the number of drinks except for common sense and/or a full stomach. Pop, malts, green rivers, wine and beer will all be available. The meal and all the drinks together will cost but \$7.00. Employees new to the district will be guests of the DMEA.

If you attended last year's event, you know what a great time everyone had. You need no encouragement. Others should look seriously at attending. Parking is easy. The parking ramp across Fifth Avenue is also just across Walnut from Capital Square. If you park in the ramp, you can cross Walnut on the skywalk and enter Capital Square only a few feet from Stella's. The time is 6:30 p.m. on Friday, September 18th. The charge for everything is \$7.00. Flyers with tear-off reservation slips are in the buildings. You can send in individual reservations or a group reservation for a bunch from your building. We need to know by Monday, September 14th. Don't miss the fun.